

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1-7 and add new Claims 11-14 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding apparatus comprising:

a sheet supporting portion on which a sheet is placed;

a feeding means provided member disposed above said sheet supporting portion, ~~for coming into and out of contact with the sheet placed on said sheet supporting portion, and for feeding to feed~~ out the sheet;

a holding member configured to hold said feeding member for rotation and to move the feeding member between a feeding position in which said feeding member is in contact with the sheet placed on said sheet supporting portion and a feeding stop position in which said feeding member is out of contact with the sheet;

a separating portion for separating the sheet fed out by said feeding means member and feeding the sheet one by one;

a regulating means member provided between said separating portion and said feeding means member and being movable between a regulating position, in which said regulating means member regulates movement of the sheet ~~placed on between~~ said sheet supporting portion ~~coming to~~ said separating portion ~~before a feeding operation by said feeding means,~~ and a retracted position in which said regulating means member does not hamper the feeding of the sheet ~~during the feeding operation of said feeding means;~~

~~interlocking means for moving said regulating means to said retracted position in operative association with the movement of said feeding means to a~~

~~feeding position in which said feeding means is in contact with the sheet when said feeding means feeds out the sheet, and moving said regulating means to said regulating position in operative association with the movement of said feeding means to a feeding stop position in which said feeding means is out of contact with the sheet~~ a link member connected between said holding member and said regulating member, said link member being moved by said holding member to move said regulating member to said retracted position when said holding member moves the feeding member to said feeding position, and said link member being moved by said holding member to move said regulating member to said regulating position when said holding member is moved to said feeding stop position; and
a movable holding member for holding said feeding means for rotation and for bringing said feeding means into and out of contact with the sheet an openable and closable cover having a guide member for guiding the sheet fed out by said feeding member,

wherein said interlocking means includes a first link member movable in operative association with the movement of said holding member, and a second link member movable in operative association with the movement of said first link member to thereby move said regulating means to said regulating position or said retracted position said link member is movably mounted on said openable and closable cover, and said regulating member, connected with said link member, is moved to said retracted position in association with an opening operation of said openable and closable cover.

2. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said link member comprises a first link member movable in operative association with the movement of said holding member, and a second link member movable in operative association with the movement of said first link member to thereby move said regulating member to said regulating position or said retracted position, and

wherein said first link member or said holding member is provided with a cam shape, and an amount of movement of said regulating ~~means~~ member moved through the intermediary of said second link member in accordance with the amount of movement of said holding member is varied by said cam shape.

3. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding apparatus according to Claim 2, ~~further comprising a guide member for guiding the sheet fed out by said feeding means,~~ wherein said cam shape is such a shape that $H > h$, where H is the amount of movement of said regulating ~~means~~ member until said feeding ~~means~~ member protrudes downwardly from said guide member through said holding member when said feeding ~~means~~ member feeds out the sheet, and h is the amount of movement of said regulating ~~means~~ member after said feeding ~~means~~ member has protruded downwardly from said guide member.

4. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus comprising:
an image reading means for reading unit to read an image of an original; and
an original feeder ~~for feeding~~ to feed the original from an original supporting portion, on which the original is placed, to said image reading ~~means~~ unit, ~~wherein~~ said original feeder comprising:

a feeding means, provided member disposed above said original supporting portion, for coming into and out of contact with the original placed on said original supporting portion and for feeding to feed out the original;

a holding member configured to hold said feeding member for rotation and to move the feeding member between a feeding position in which said feeding member is in contact with the sheet placed on said sheet supporting portion and a feeding stop position in which said feeding member is out of contact with the sheet;

a separating portion for separating the original fed out by said feeding means member and feeding the original one by one to said image reading means unit;

a regulating means member provided between said separating portion and said feeding means member and being movable between a regulating position, in which said regulating means member regulates movement of the original placed on said original supporting portion coming to said separating portion before a feeding operation by said feeding means, and a retracted position in which said regulating means member does not hamper the feeding of the original during the feeding operation of said feeding means;

interlocking means for moving said regulating means to said retracted position in operative association with the movement of said feeding means to a feeding position in which said feeding means is in contact with the original when said feeding means feeds out the original, and moving said regulating means to said regulating position in operative association with the movement of said feeding means to a feeding stop position in which said feeding means is out of contact with the original a link member connected between said holding member and said regulating member, said link member

being moved by said holding member to move said regulating member to said retracted position when said holding member moves the holding member to said feeding position, said link member being moved by said holding member to move said regulating member to said regulating position when said holding member is moved to said feeding stop position;
and

~~a movable holding member for holding said feeding means for rotation and for bringing said feeding means into and out of contact with the original~~ an openable and closable cover having a guide member for guiding the sheet fed out by said feeding member,

~~wherein said interlocking means includes a first link member movable in operative association with the movement of said holding member, and a second link member movable in operative association with the movement of said first link member to thereby move said regulating means to said regulating position or said retracted position~~ said link member is movably mounted on said openable and closable cover, and said regulating member, connected with said link member, is moved to said retracted position in association with an opening operation of said openable and closable cover.

5. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said link member comprises a first link member movable in operative association with the movement of said holding member, and a second link member movable in operative association with the movement of said first link member to thereby move said regulating member to said regulating position or said retracted position, and

wherein said first link member or said holding member is provided with a cam shape, and an amount of movement of said regulating ~~means~~ member moved through the intermediary of said second link member in accordance with the amount of movement of said holding member is varied by said cam shape.

6. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 5, ~~further comprising a~~ wherein said guide member is provided above said original supporting portion and below said feeding ~~means~~ member located at said feeding stop position ~~for guiding the original fed out by said feeding means, and~~

wherein said cam shape is such a shape that $H > h$, where H is the amount of movement of said regulating ~~means~~ member until said feeding ~~means~~ member protrudes downwardly from said guide member through said holding member when said feeding ~~means~~ member feeds out the original, and h is the amount of movement of said regulating ~~means~~ member after said feeding ~~means~~ member has protruded downwardly from said guide member.

7. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 6, ~~further comprising an openable and closable cover having said guide member provided on an underside of said openable and closable cover,~~ wherein said first link member and said second link member are movably mounted on said openable and closable cover, and with an opening operation of said openable and closable cover, said regulating ~~means~~ member is moved to said retracted position together with said second link member.

8. (Previously Presented) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein said second link member is provided with a restraining portion for restraining said holding member to thereby regulate the downward movement of said holding member when said openable and closable cover is opened.

9. (Previously Presented) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein said openable and closable cover opens said separating portion.

10. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image reading apparatus as recited in any one of Claims 4 to 9;
and
an image forming portion for forming an image on the basis of
image information read by said image reading apparatus.

Please add the following new Claims 11-14.

11. (New) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said link member or said holding member is provided with a second cam shape,
wherein said guide member is provided above said original supporting portion and below a position of said feeding member when said holding member is located at said feeding stop position, and
wherein said second cam shape is such a shape that an amount of movement of said regulating member with respect to an amount of movement of said

holding member until said feeding member is protruded downwardly from said guide member when said feeding member feeds out the original is larger than an amount of movement of said regulating member with respect to an amount of movement of said holding member after said feeding member is protruded downwardly from said guide member.

12. (New) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said holding member and said regulating member are provided on said openable and closable cover, and

wherein said holding member is moved with respect to said openable and closable cover in association with the opening operation of said openable and closable cover so that relative positions of said openable and closable cover and said holding member are changed, and said link member acts on said openable and closable cover so that said regulating member is moved to said retracted position by a movement of the holding member with respect to said openable and closable cover in association with the opening operation of said openable and closable cover.

13. (New) A sheet feeding apparatus comprising:

a sheet supporting portion on which a sheet is placed;
a feeding member configured to come into contact with the sheet placed on said sheet supporting portion and to feed out the sheet;
a separation portion for separating the sheet fed out by said feeding member and feeding the sheet one by one;

an openable and closable cover having a guide member for guiding the sheet fed out by said feeding member;

a regulating member provided between said separating portion and said feeding member and being movable between a regulating position, in which said regulating member regulates movement of the sheet between said sheet supporting portion and said separating portion, and a retracted position in which said regulating member does not hamper the feeding of the sheet; and

a link member connected to said cover and said regulating member to be moved by an opening movement of said openable and closable cover when said openable and closable cover is opened and to move said regulating member,

wherein said link member is moved by the opening movement of said openable and closable cover so that said regulating member is moved from said regulating position to said retracted position.

14. (New) A sheet feeding apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said link member and said regulating member are movably mounted on said openable and closable cover, and

wherein said link member is moved with respect to said openable and closable cover by the opening movement of said openable and closable cover so that said regulating member is moved with respect to said openable and closable cover.